



Woodland adult school still vulnerable

By KATHERINE JARVIS / Daily Democrat

Created: 03/03/2011 02:30:28 AM PST

While cuts to Woodland Adult Education were removed from a resolution approved by the board, the school is still vulnerable.

The Woodland school board passed a resolution, 5-2, Tuesday night during its special meeting, reducing or eliminating certificated staff positions -- which includes teachers.

The resolution called for the reduction of 73 full-time equivalent positions, which includes 14 positions at Woodland Adult Education. However, Trustee Julie Jackson asked to remove the Adult Education layoffs from the resolution.

This brings the number down to 59 positions to receive pink slips, including 38 teachers and the rest counselors, vice principals and other administrative and instructional support staff.

Before the

board discussed the resolution and how it could affect Adult Education, several people spoke during public comment regarding the significance of the program.

Julie Mast, a teacher at Adult Education, mentioned the 247 graduates from the school in 2009-10, the largest graduating class yet. This includes students who completed their high school diploma or received their GED.

Mast said students from Woodland or Pioneer high schools who went to Adult Education instead of dropping out and completed their diploma were considered graduates rather than dropouts. She said the drop-out rate would rise dramatically if Adult Education was cut.

"This virtually guts our program and changes adult education as we know it," Mast said, regarding

potential cuts.

A majority of the trustees agreed. Adult Education also provides English as a Second Language courses, parent education, personal enrichment courses and programs for older adults and those with disabilities.

"Elimination or a major overhaul would be a huge loss to our community," said Trustee Carol Souza Cole.

Board President Warren Berg and Trustee David Hartley disagreed with the rest of the board.

Berg said the resolution is a timeline and gives the district options. Certificated employees have to receive pink slips by March 15, but it doesn't necessarily mean they will be laid off by the time the budget is set to be passed in June.

Hartley said the board was "micromanaging" by not passing the resolution as is.

Regardless, Trustees Angel Barajas and Julie Blacklock both said placing the Adult Education layoffs on the resolution sets "a bad tone."

Barajas suggested looking at cuts between 10 to 35 percent, rather than close to eliminating or restructuring the program. He said the principal of Adult Education, Susan Moylan, would know where

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it would be best to cut. Moylan's position was one proposed to be cut.

While cuts to Adult Education are being discussed, Moylan and the program will receive the Yolo County Excellence in Education Award for the Woodland school district March 7.

Associate Superintendent Mike Stevens said Adult Education is the most complicated piece to negotiate when cutting positions regarding seniority and there is not much time to look at different solutions.

The school board will have another special meeting at 5:30 p.m. today at the District Office, 435 Sixth St. A presentation on the costs of Adult Education is scheduled and a resolution will be presented regarding potential layoffs at the school.

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